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Statistical Framework for Measuring Quality of Employment

Statistical Framework for Measuring Quality of Employment

Note by the Expert Group on Measuring Quality of Employment

Summary

The paper provides an extract of the draft Statistical Framework for Measuring Quality of Employment. This extract defines the concept of quality of employment, presents the elements and principles of the Statistical Framework and introduces the dimensions of quality of employment with the respective indicators. The paper also includes a list of issues for further work and guidance on using the indicators.

The Statistical Framework was developed by the Expert Group on Measuring Quality of Employment, chaired by Germany. The Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians reviewed the Statistical Framework in October 2014, supported the Framework and decided to submit it to the 2015 plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians.

The full text of the Statistical Framework has been sent to all members of the Conference for electronic consultation. Subject to positive outcome of the consultation, the Framework will be submitted to the 2015 plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians for endorsement.

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I. Introduction

1. The Statistical Framework for Measuring Quality of Employment was prepared by the Expert Group on Measuring Quality of Employment, established by the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES). It aims at providing a clear and coherent structure for measuring quality of employment. Quality of employment is approached as a multidimensional concept, characterised by different elements, which relate to human needs in various ways. To cover all relevant aspects, the framework identifies seven dimensions and twelve sub-dimensions of quality of employment:

(a) Safety and ethics of employment:
- Safety at work;
- Child labour and forced labour;
- Fair treatment in employment;

(b) Income and benefits from employment:
- Income;
- Non-wage pecuniary benefits;

(c) Working time and work-life balance:
- Working hours;
- Working time arrangements;
- Work life balance;

(d) Security of employment and social protection:
- Security of employment;
- Social protection;

(d) Social dialogue;

(e) Skills development and training;

(f) Employment-related relationships and work motivation:
- Employment-related relationships;
- Work motivation.

2. For each dimension and sub-dimension, the framework presents a number of statistical indicators that may be produced. The annex of the statistical framework includes the full list of indicators for measuring quality of employment together with detailed indicator sheets for the indicators, which provide operational definitions and suggest guidelines for compiling and interpreting the indicators. The framework is intended to allow flexibility to meet the needs of countries that wish to analyse the quality of employment, according to specific national policy requirements and institutional backgrounds of countries. The framework also includes suggestions for context information that should be considered to facilitate the interpretation of the indicators on quality of employment. Context information may include statistical indicators on the economic and social context of employment, employment opportunities (e. g. employment-to-population ratio, unemployment rate) as well as information regarding the legal and institutional context of employment.

3. The conceptual framework defines quality of employment from the point of view of the employed person. It refers to the entirety of aspects of employment that may affect the well-being of employed persons. This may differ from the point of view of the employer or the society as a whole. The framework acknowledges that different aspects of quality of employment may be perceived differently by different individuals. The proposed indicators are defined in such a way that allows assessment for specific subpopulation groups, such as women compared to men, young or older workers compared to middle aged, lower compared to higher-educated persons, migrants compared to nationals or inhabitants of different regions.

4. In the process of reviewing the dimensions and developing the indicators (as well as the indicator sheets), the Expert Group has drawn on the relevant international standards and the existing international research. In particular, the standards adopted by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) and the International Labour Conference (ILC) served as important references in developing the framework and indicator sheets. The relevance of the indicators is well established on these grounds, although the statistical framework avoids value judgement, e.g. regarding the distinction of "high quality" and "low quality" employment. The presentation of the statistical framework, together with the indicator sheets, elaborates further on why the indicators have been selected and their importance in the context of measuring quality of employment. Still, any value judgement is left to the users of the statistics.

5. The framework acknowledges other international efforts that have been undertaken in the area of measuring quality of employment. Both the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the European Union (EU) have developed indicators for related purposes. In contrast to other indicator sets, the proposed statistical framework is not linked to a particular policy agenda. The framework is considered a statistical toolbox that provides practical guidance to countries that wish to compile statistics on quality of employment. Despite the different objectives of other international frameworks, the former Task Forces and the current Expert Group on Measuring Quality of Employment have reviewed the underlying concepts and variables used in other frameworks in order to ensure conceptual consistency to the greatest extent possible. ILO, Eurostat and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) contributed actively to the development of the statistical framework to achieve this objective.

6. The framework stresses the need for continued research and exchange of experience at the international level to keep it up-to-date. Changes in labour markets may necessitate the development of additional indicators or make existing ones obsolete. A few indicators are earmarked as experimental, as the Expert Group felt the need to develop further experiences. The document identifies a list of research areas that are recommended to be considered for further research.

II. Background

7. Quality of employment is an important issue for society, policy makers, governments and researchers. In many countries, the heterogeneity of employment types has increased over the last few decades. Non-standard types of employment have grown substantially, while the share of standard full-time jobs with open ended contracts has decreased. These issues underscore the importance of collecting more systematic information on the quality of employment in order to complement the well-established quantitative labour market indicators.

8. Employment is central to the life of people in many countries, not only in terms of providing income. Employment influences quality of life in many respects: it is often the key to social and economic advancement, it provides one with a sense of identity and it offers opportunities to socialise with others. At the same time, employment is not without risk. Some types of employment can have negative implications on health and also restrict opportunities in non-working life.[1] Quality of employment may play an important part in countries that are faced with the problem of an ageing labour force, as it is a key factor to enhance sustainability of employment.[2]

9. In many countries, employment situations differ significantly across demographic and social population groups, as well as across (national) regions. For example, the characteristics of employment of men and women differ in many respects. Hence, quality of employment needs to be measured not only for all employed persons, but also for relevant sub-groups, such as men and women, young and old workers or natives and migrants.

10. Many international organisations emphasise the importance of quality of employment in their work. The main purpose of the ILO's work is *"to promote opportunities for men and women to obtain decent and productive work"*[3]. The ILO's work includes a focus on worker rights; employment creation; social protection; and social dialogue between workers' organisations, employers' organisations and governments. In Europe, the Europe 2020 strategy identified employment and job quality as essential elements for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.[4] The promotion of quality of work is a "guiding principle" in the Social Policy Agenda of the EU. In 2000, heads of State and Governments of the EU set the *"overall goal of moving to full employment through creating not only more, but also better jobs"*.[5] Subsequent meetings of the European Council have also concluded that promoting quality and productivity at work is a priority for the EU.

11. OECD has launched important activities to follow up on the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Commission through the OECD 'Better Life Initiative' as well as a project on defining, measuring and assessing job quality. In the report, *How's Life?*, there are several components of well-being related to the measurement of the quality of employment (for example, jobs and earnings and work-life balance) and due reference is given to the work of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) on the topic.[6] Several other initiatives to implement the recommendations of the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi-Commission took the UNECE's work on measuring quality of employment as the reference frame for this part of their

[1] See e.g. Stiglitz, Joseph; Sen, Amartya; Fitoussi, Jean-Paul, 2009: *Report by the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress*. At www.stiglitz-sen-fitoussi.fr, p. 49

[2] See, e.g., Europfound, 2008: *Working conditions of an ageing workforce*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities2008.

[3] Juan Somavia, former ILO Director-General, as stated at http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/mission-and-objectives/lang--en/index.htm, October 25, 2012.

[4] European Commission: Employment and Social Developments in Europe 2011. At http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/esde/2011.

[5] Lozano, Esteban, 2005: *Quality in work: Dimensions and Indicators in the Framework of the European Employment Strategy*, UNECE/ILO/Eurostat Seminar on the Quality of Work, Geneva, May 11 to 13, 2005, p. 2.

[6] OECD, 2011: *How's Life ? Measuring Well-Being*. OECD, Paris, 2011. OECD, 2014: *How good is your job? Measuring and assessing job quality*. In: OECD (ed.): Employment Outlook 2014, pp. 79-139.

work.[7] In Australia, a large scale consultation about the indicator set "Measures of Australia's Progress" (MAP) confirmed the importance of quality of paid work as an essential part of people's lives. The consultation identified income, job satisfaction, flexible arrangements, safe and healthy working conditions and effective industrial relations environments as elements of quality of employment.[8]

12. To assist countries with monitoring and developing their policies to improve quality of employment, both ILO and EU have developed sets of statistical indicators. The ILO indicators for the measurement of decent work are grouped under eleven substantive elements, which cover the four strategic objectives of the Decent Work Agenda: employment creation, guaranteeing rights at work, extending social protection and promoting social dialogue. The Decent Work indicators presented at the 18th ICLS in 2008 include a set of statistical indicators combined with "indicators" on the legal framework. Within the EU, two sets of indicators are used. One set of indicators is maintained by the European Commission for monitoring labour market policies. Another set was developed and is in use by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound).

13. The purpose of UNECE's work on quality of employment, which dates back to 2000, is to develop a statistical framework for measuring quality of employment. In contrast to the other existing indicator sets, the statistical framework is not linked to a particular policy agenda and therefore does not monitor progress towards specified targets. It has been developed as a statistical toolbox that can be applied flexibly and used in various contexts, according to the specific policy requirements and institutional backgrounds of countries. In the development of the framework, two Task Forces were created in 2005 and 2007 under the auspices of CES in order to work on the methodology for measuring quality of employment. The 2007 Task Force developed a framework for measuring quality of employment with 7 dimensions and over 50 indicators, following a series of implementation studies. The framework was implemented by at least 9 countries by the end of the Task Force's term.[9] A first version of the present document was drafted by the 2007 Task Force.

14. The current Expert Group on Measuring Quality of Employment was established in February 2012 comprising Azerbaijan, Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany (chair), Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Mexico, Republic of Moldova, Netherlands, Poland, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Eurostat, Eurofound, ILO, OECD, UNECE (secretariat) and Women in Informal Employment Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO). The Expert Group has the following objectives:

(a) Review and revise the conceptual structure of measuring quality of employment as outlined in the *Report on Potential Indicators for Measurement of Quality of Employment*;

[7] See, e.g., *Monitoring Economic Performance, Quality of Life and Sustainability*. Joint Report as requested by the Franco-German Ministerial Council. Paris, Wiesbaden 2010.

[8] Australian Bureau of Statistics: Measures of Australia's Progress. Aspirations for our nation: A conversation with Australians about progress, p. 91. At http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1370.0.00.002

[9] UNECE, 2010: *Measuring Quality of Employment, Country Pilot Reports*. UNECE, Geneva, 2010.

(b) Revise the set of indicators of quality of employment in order to reflect the issues that were raised at the 58th CES plenary session, in country reports and during the Expert Group meeting on 31 October-2 November 2011 and;

(c) Develop operational definitions and computation guidelines (including on data sources and limitations) for quality of employment indicators.

15. This document introduces the statistical framework for measuring quality of employment, specifies the objectives and structure of the framework and introduces a list of recommended indicators for measuring quality of employment. The annexes include the list of indicators as well as detailed *indicator sheets* for all of the indicators. These indicator sheets provide operational definitions and detailed guidelines for compiling the indicators as well as for their interpretation in the context of quality of employment.

III. The concept of quality of employment

16. The statistical framework follows the definition of employment endorsed by the *Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilisation* adopted by the 19th ICLS held in October 2013.[10] This Resolution (hereafter referred to as the 19th ICLS Resolution on work statistics) presents not only refinements to existing ICLS standards on conceptual definitions and guidelines on the labour force and related components, but also a new framework and guidelines for measuring different forms of work as well as recommendations on measures of labour underutilisation. According to this Resolution, *work* is defined as any activity performed by persons of any sex and age to produce goods or to provide services for use by others or for own use. This definition of work is consistent with the *general* production boundary of the System of National Accounts (SNA) and enables full compilation of national production accounts and satellite accounts. *Employment work* refers to work performed (for use by other units) in exchange for pay or profit. The form of work identified as employment at the same time sets the reference scope for the definition of the *labour force*. The concept of the labour force refers to the current supply of labour for the production of goods and services in exchange for pay or profit.

17. According to the 19th ICLS Resolution on work statistics, *persons in employment* are defined as all those of working age who, during a short reference period, either worked in a job for pay or profit for at least one hour or were temporarily absent from such a job in which they had already worked. *Pay or profit* refers to work done as part of a transaction in exchange for remuneration, which may be payable either as wages or salaries for time worked or work done, or as profit (or loss) derived through market transactions from the goods and/or services produced. Remuneration may be in cash or in kind, whether actually received or not. The 19th ICLS Resolution on work statistics defines a *job* as a set of tasks and duties performed, or meant to be performed, by one person for a single economic unit. Persons may have one or several jobs. Notably, many quality of employment indicators, including those related to employment-related income and working time,

[10] *Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization,* adopted by the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (October 2013). Available at: http://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/standards-and-guidelines/resolutions-adopted-by-international-conferences-of-labour-statisticians/WCMS_230304/lang--en/index.htm

should ideally cover all jobs of multiple jobholders since the perspective of the employed person is taken into account. This is a feature distinguishing the quality of employment framework from a job quality framework. In cases where the main job is used as the reference among multiple job-holders, the main job should refer to the one with the longest hours usually worked.[11]

18. In accordance with the importance of multiple job holding in a given country, countries may decide to focus on the main job when calculating indicators on quality of employment. It is recommended to provide information regarding secondary job(s) whenever necessary. Still, countries should take into account that more detailed information tends to be available for the main job. If information is provided for both main and secondary job(s), it should be provided in breakdown by main and secondary jobs (e.g. concerning earnings or working hours) in order not to restrict the analytical potential.

19. The statistical framework was designed for measuring the quality of employment (i.e. work for pay or profit). Many dimensions and indicators could however also be relevant for other types of work, for instance own-use production of goods and unpaid trainee work. According to national circumstances, countries may consider extending the scope of parts of the indicators to other forms of work, if deemed necessary. In this case, it is however recommended to provide breakdowns by form of work. In the case of sub-dimension 1b (Child labour and forced labour), a broader scope is suggested as the restriction to employment work does not seem appropriate in this specific case.

20. Quality of employment is a complex concept. Its definition and components depend on whether quality of employment is assessed from the perspective of the society, the corporation or the individual.[12] Of course there are overlaps between the societal, corporate and individual views on what constitutes high quality employment. Both employers and workers, for example, presumably have a strong interest in reducing accidents in employment. Likewise, workers usually have an interest in working for a profitable enterprise. However, one can also imagine contrasting views. For example, what an employee might see as "high wages" (to his or her benefit) the employer might view as high labour costs weighing down the firm's profits.

21. The Expert Group on Measuring Quality of Employment adopts the individual's perspective on quality of employment. Quality of employment can be defined as the entirety of aspects of employment that may affect the well-being of employed persons. In other words, quality of employment refers to the conditions and ethics of employment, monetary and non-pecuniary benefits, working time arrangements and work-life balance, employment security and social protection, skills development and training as well as work motivation and employment-related relationships of an individual. Employment is not only analysed as a source of income, but also as providing social security, identity and self-esteem. The quality of

[11] *Resolution concerning the measurement of working time*, adopted by the Eighteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (November-December 2008). Available at: http://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/standards-and-guidelines/resolutions-adopted-by-international-conferences-of-labour-statisticians/WCMS_112455/lang--en/index.htm

[12] Vermeylen, Greet, 2005: *Quality in work and employment in the European Working Conditions Survey*, Working Paper no. 4 UNECE/ILO/Eurostat Seminar on the Quality of Work, Geneva, May 11 to 13, 2005, p.2, available at: http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/documents/2005/05/labour/wp.4.e.pdf

employment for a person with more than one job ideally takes important characteristics of the secondary job(s) into account.

22. Quality of employment is a multidimensional concept, characterised by many different facets, or dimensions, which relate to human needs in various ways. These dimensions are not hierarchical and no single dimension is more important than another. For example, *income and benefits from employment* and *security of employment and social protection* are both dimensions of quality of employment, but it is difficult to argue that decent pay is more important than a secure job or vice versa. Albeit closely interlinked, the dimensions are also to some degree independent from one another. The situation in one dimension cannot necessarily be deduced from the situation in others.

23. The assessment will also be influenced by the specific socio-economic context. For example, a country's view of quality of employment for those with few hours of work may differ during a time of recession compared to a period of strong growth. Similarly, the definition of "high quality" or "low quality" jobs may differ across countries depending on average levels of income across countries.

24. Quality of employment also has a subjective component. An employment characteristic may be perceived as highly rewarding by one worker and as stressful by another. For example, some might see working part-time as a good opportunity to combine work and family life, whereas others might emphasise reduced income opportunities of part-time jobs or implications for their level of social security. Also, job perceived as favourable in one phase of life might be viewed differently in another one.

25. In the process of identifying dimensions and relevant indicators, statisticians can draw on existing international standards, such as the Resolutions and Guidelines adopted by ICLS and the Declarations, Conventions and Recommendations adopted by the ILO International Labour Conference (ILC), as well as a rich body of international research. Internationally, there is a broad consensus that some types of employment should be abolished. This is the case for child labour and forced labour. Although the framework avoids value judgement, such cases are in no way relativised. Furthermore, a body of international research over many decades has provided evidence that specific employment situations can adversely affect a person's quality of life.[13] For example, working long hours can have negative health implications and often has a negative impact on work-life balance. This does not imply, however, that certain types of employment are considered per se "low" quality. The impact will depend on the institutional and cultural context as well as the personal characteristics and preferences of the worker. The rationale of the selection of the dimensions and sub-dimensions, as well as the indicators is elaborated further in section IV. The indicator sheets include further explanations for each indicator as well as specific references to existing research.

[13] For recent examples, see, e.g. Green, Francis, 2006: *Demanding work. The paradox of job quality in affluent economy*. Princeton and Oxford: Oxford University Press. Kalleberg, Arne L., 2011: *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs. The rise of polarized and precarious employment systems in the United States, 1970s to 2000s*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation. Guillén, Ana M. and Svenn-Åge Dahl (eds.), 2009: *Quality of Work in the European Union. Concept, Data and Debates from a Transnational Perspective*. Brussels: Peter Lang. Gallie, Duncan (ed.), 2007: *Employment Regimes and the Quality of Work*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Muñoz de Bustillo, Rafael et al, 2011: *Measuring More Than Money – The Social Economics of Job Quality*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

26. Official statistics has an important role to play by providing relevant, reliable and impartial statistical information that can be used to understand and interpret the elements of quality of employment. Producers of official statistics should compile and release data on an objective basis determined by statistical considerations only. While statisticians can analyse the correlation between certain aspects of employment and the employed persons' well-being, they should not make value judgments about what is considered "high quality" or "low quality" employment.

IV. Elements and principles of the statistical framework

27. The statistical framework presented in this paper specifies the concept of quality of employment in seven dimensions. The dimensions are further subdivided into sub-dimensions where appropriate. In each of the dimensions and sub-dimensions, the framework proposes a list of statistical indicators. Detailed descriptions of each indicator - indicator sheets – have been developed to provide guidance for the computation and interpretation of the indicators. The Expert Group believes that the framework is comprehensive enough to support work by a diverse set of countries.

28. The framework provides a conceptual structure that can be used to give a comprehensive picture of quality of employment. It can be seen as a toolbox for compiling data and calculating indicators on quality of employment. The dimensions and the indicators proposed were selected on the basis of recognised research on quality of employment and studies in countries. The framework adheres to the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, which stipulate that official statistics should be relevant and impartial and that the methods and procedures for the collection, processing, storage and presentation of statistical data should be based on strictly professional considerations.[14] The framework does not include judgements regarding the distinction of "high quality" and "low quality" employment, but includes indicators for their relevance to quality of employment. Any value judgement is left to the users of the data.

29. Some information related to quality of employment may be available in one country but not in another. In the view of the Expert Group, it may not be possible or efficient for each country to produce exactly the same information. Rather, the approach here is to provide a comprehensive set of indicators which countries may draw from. Countries are free to select those indicators from the framework that they deem useful considering their national circumstances, as well as to choose the suitable data source.

30. It is important to note that no single indicator can provide a holistic view of trends in quality of employment. Therefore a variety of indicators should be analysed jointly in order to provide a comprehensive picture.

31. The statistical framework is designed to help users measuring quality of employment from the individual's perspective. In other words, the framework for measuring quality of employment is based on the components (dimensions and sub-dimensions) of quality of employment that are relevant to the employed person. This approach is quite similar to what is proposed in recent conceptual work where job

[14] See the UN *Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics*, available at: http://www.unece.org/stats/archive/docs.fp.e.html

quality is defined as the characteristics of employment that affect the well-being of the worker.[15]

32. The difference between the statistical framework for measuring quality of employment and other existing frameworks is that this framework has been developed as a statistical toolbox that can be used in various contexts and does not aim to monitor progress towards targets in a given policy agenda.

33. Interested countries can use the relevant components of the statistical framework based on their requirements and according to the policy needs in their country. Despite the different objectives of other international frameworks, the former Task Forces and the current Expert Group on Measuring Quality of Employment have reviewed the underlying concepts and variables used in other frameworks in order to ensure conceptual consistency to the greatest extent possible.

34. The following principles were followed in the development of the statistical framework for measuring quality of employment:

(a) The dimensions, sub-dimensions and indicators of quality of employment are organised using a transparent, logical structure;

(b) All dimensions, sub-dimensions and indicators are clearly relevant for quality of employment, demonstrated by empirical research and country experiences;

(c) The dimensions, sub-dimensions and indicators for measuring quality of employment are sufficiently broad to allow countries the necessary adaptations to national circumstances;

(d) Each indicator of quality of employment is of sufficient importance at least within a group of countries to justify measurement;

(e) The statistics of quality of employment are technically feasible to produce, but the current availability of data did not drive the selection of indicators. While the framework is designed to draw from existing sources, countries may need to consider expanding the collection of statistics on quality of employment where desirable;

(f) The indicators are developed, wherever possible, using international recommendations and guidelines on classifications, concepts, definitions and computation methods and definitions. The indicators are those which both National Statistical Offices (NSOs) and other statistics-producing bodies find appropriate to provide data for.

35. The first principle relates to the organisation of the indicators, which is based on individual needs from employment. The second, third and fourth principles ensure that comprehensive, varied indicators allow countries to measure quality of employment for employed persons by age, economic activity, occupation group or status in employment. The fifth principle ensures practicality, suggesting simple indicators that can be produced using data collection programmes common in many countries, such as population censuses or household surveys (for example, labour force surveys). This aims to facilitate ease of use, although it is of lower priority; practicality is important, but simply choosing what is currently available would not encourage statistical development. The sixth principle relates the indicators to the

[15] Muñoz de Bustillo, Rafael et al., 2011: *Measuring more than money: The social economics of job quality*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham 2011.

international standards that are currently in place, for example, the standards adopted by ICLS.

36. The statistical framework includes two types of indicators: "objective" and "subjective" indicators. It should be noted that it is not always straightforward to draw a clear line between "objective" and "subjective" indicators, as the perception of the respondents is often involved to some degree when measuring factual information. Countries that do not consider the use of "subjective" indicators relevant are free to restrict their choice to the other indicators.

37. The conceptual framework focuses on quality aspects of employment. For this reason, general labour market indicators, such as unemployment rates, are considered outside the scope of the quality of employment indicators. Nevertheless, reflecting the importance of this information for the interpretation of many indicators, such general labour market indicators are included in the framework as context information.

38. Information regarding the legal and institutional context in a given country often further facilitates the interpretation of indicators on quality of employment. The Expert Group recommends that countries consider the list of legal framework indicators developed in the ILO's Decent Work measurement framework by referring to the ILO Decent work indicators manual.[16]

39. The guiding principles, dimensions and sub-dimensions of the framework may be updated from time to time, but should remain relatively stable. The list of indicators, and in particular the indicator sheets, however, should be periodically reviewed in order to remain relevant in light of changes of employment types and patterns (see section V).

V. Defining the dimensions of quality of employment

40. This section defines the dimensions and sub-dimensions of the framework and explains the importance of each of the dimensions for quality of employment. The structure of the framework is intended to cover human needs that may be satisfied through employment. The proposed seven dimensions of quality of employment are illustrated in Figure 1.

41. The dimensions and sub-dimensions of the framework for measuring quality of employment are presented below. It is important to note that the ordering of the dimensions does not imply any hierarchy among the dimensions and each may be considered equally important.

(a) Safety and ethics of employment:

- Safety at work;
- Child labour and forced labour;
- Fair treatment in employment;

(b) Income and benefits from employment:

- Income;

[16] International Labour Organisation, 2013: *Decent Work Indicators. Guidelines for Producers and Users of Statistical and Legal Framework Indicators*. ILO Manual, Second version, Geneva: ILO.

- Non-wage pecuniary benefits;

(c) Working time and work-life balance:

- Working hours;
- Working time arrangements;
- Work-life balance;

(d) Security of employment and social protection:

- Security of employment;
- Social protection;

(e) Social dialogue;

(f) Skills development and training;

(g) Employment-related relationships and work motivation:

- Employment-related relationships;
- Work motivation.

Figure 1
The dimensions of quality of employment

Quality of Employment
1 Safety and ethics of employment
2 Income and benefits from employment
3 Working Time and work-life balance
4 Security of Employment and social protection
5 Social dialogue
6 Skills development and training
7 employment-related relationships and work motivation

42. The list of indicators is based on the list of potential indicators endorsed by CES at its fifty-eighth plenary session in June 2010.[17] This list of indicators had previously been tested in various ways: Nine country profiles were prepared, which were sponsored by the International Labour Organisation and used funds provided by the European Union. In addition, a validation study had been conducted by the Italian National Statistical Institute (ISTAT).[18] Further independent country reports have also applied these indicators in different national contexts.

43. The current Expert Group on Measuring Quality of Employment proposed revisions of this list of indicators in order to incorporate comments given at the fifty-eighth Plenary Session of the CES and to reflect issues raised in the country reports to date and at the Sixth Meeting of the Group of Experts on Measuring Quality of Employment (31 October-2 November 2011). The revision also incorporated the changes made necessary by the adoption of the *Resolution on statistics of work, employment and labour underutilisation* by the 19th ICLS in 2013. Further suggestions were made to revise, remove, add or replace indicators to enhance relevant measurement in all dimensions of quality of employment. Specifications of the indicators regarding definition and formula, measurement objectives, recommended disaggregations, data sources as well as limitations and interpretation guidelines are to be found in the indicator sheets.

A. Dimension 1: Safety and ethics of employment

44. The dimension on safety and ethics of employment focuses both on physical safety and conditions at work, physical health and mental well-being, as well as the rights and treatment of the person in employment. In this way, the dimension is a fundamental component of quality of employment, as physical well-being and the application of internationally accepted human rights and labour conventions are essential to ensure high quality employment. The indicators under this dimension provide general information on workplace injuries, forms of labour such as child and forced labour, and unfair treatment.

1. Sub-dimension 1a: Safety at work

45. The physical safety and health aspect of quality of employment is covered by the sub-dimension *Safety at work*. Risks of injury or death can exist across all types of employment, and thus indicators of safety at work are an important element of quality of employment.

[17] UNECE, 2010: *Potential indicators for measurement of quality of employment. Note by the secretariat.* Conference of European Statisticians, fifty-eighth plenary session, 8–10 June 2010, document ECE/CES/2010/9. Available at: www.unece.org/stats/documents/ece/ces/2010/9.e.pdf

[18] See ISTAT, 2009: *A Validation Study of the Quality of Employment Indicators.* Prepared for the Task Force on the Measurement of Quality of Employment. Rome: ISTAT 2009. Available at: http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/documents/qualityofemployment/Validation%20Study_QoE.pdf

Indicators in sub-dimension 1a Safety at Work		
1a1	Fatal occupational injuries	Rate of fatal occupational injuries per 100,000 employed persons
1a2	Nonfatal occupational injuries	Rate of nonfatal occupational injuries per 100,000 employed persons
1a3	Exposure to physical health risk factors	Percentage of employed persons who are exposed to physical health risk factors at work
1a4	Exposure to mental health risk factors	Percentage of employed persons who are exposed to mental well-being risk factors at work

2. Sub-dimension 1b: Child labour and forced labour

46. The sub-dimension *Child labour and forced labour* is closely related to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and other international conventions requiring that certain types of work should be abolished, in particular child labour and forced labour. Against this background, protecting children from economic exploitation and from work that is dangerous to their health and morals is a key element of quality of employment as is the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour. For this reason, *Child labour and forced labour* is included as a separate sub-dimension of quality of employment. The 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 2008 adopted the Resolution concerning statistics of child labour, which contains concepts, definitions and methods of data collection on child labour, including its worst forms.[19]

Indicators in sub-dimension 1b Child Labour and Forced Labour		
1b1	Child labour rate	Percentage of children aged 5 to 17 years who are engaged in child labour
1b2	Hazardous child labour rate	Percentage of children aged 5 to 17 years who are engaged in hazardous child labour
1b3	Forced labour rate	Percentage of persons who are in forced labour
1b4	Forced labour rate among returned migrants	Percentage of returned labour migrants who were in forced labour
1bx	Other worst forms of child labour (experimental)	Percentage of children aged 5 to 17 years who are engaged in worst forms of child labour other than hazardous work

[19] The ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) has worked extensively in this area. The ILO Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC), which is the statistical branch of IPEC, supports countries in the development of statistics on the level, characteristics and determinants of child labour.

3. Sub-dimension 1c: Fair treatment in employment

47. The elimination of discrimination in respect to employment and occupation is another one of the four ILO Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. Discrimination at work includes any less favourable treatment that is explicitly or implicitly based on particular grounds, such as sex, race, etc. (direct discrimination), or, although neutral on the surface, the same condition, treatment or criterion leading in practice to a harsh impact on some persons on the basis of characteristics such as race, colour, sex, etc. (indirect discrimination). Discrimination at work denies opportunities for individuals who may, for example, be denied equal pay or the access to managerial positions or may experience less favourable working conditions. The 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalisation underlines the particular importance of gender equality and non-discrimination as a strategic cross-cutting aspect of quality of employment.

Indicators in sub-dimension 1c Fair treatment in employment

For the measurement of fair treatment, users should consider the demographic or social groups relevant given the national circumstances. It is recommended to always provide breakdowns by sex and age groups. Groups for which fair treatment could be an issue include sex, ethnic groups, immigrants, indigenous population groups, persons with disabilities, age groups, and geographic regions. Furthermore, the following specific indicators on fair treatment should be included.

1c1	Pay gap	Pay gap between subpopulation groups (e.g., gender pay gap)
1c2	Access to managerial occupations	Percentage of employed persons in population subgroups (e.g., women) in managerial occupations (ISCO-08 major group 1)
1c3	Discrimination at work	Percentage of employed persons who have been a victim of discrimination at work

B. Dimension 2: Income and benefits from employment

48. The employment-related income that people receive is clearly an important component of quality of employment. A motivation shared by most employed persons is to earn their living. Most people depend on income from employment for their material well-being. Moreover, people value payment for their work, but they also consider the leave, health coverage and other benefits provided by their work when asking themselves "what is a good job?"[20]

49. The concept of income from employment is framed broadly to include earnings to employees (which includes wages and salaries as well as certain non-wage benefits such as paid leave, as defined below) and also income related to self-employment (also defined below).

[20] In a survey conducted on about 2,500 Canadians, over half of the respondents said that benefits were "very important" in a job, while over 6 in ten said that good pay was very important. Interestingly, the same survey compared what workers want in a job to what they feel they actually get. The largest "job quality deficits" were noted in pay, benefits and the related concept of advancement opportunities.

1. Sub-dimension 2a: Income from employment

50. The sub-dimension *Income from employment* provides information on the earnings paid to employees as well as income from self-employment. The concept of earnings was defined in the *Resolution concerning an integrated system of wages statistics*[21] adopted by the Twelfth ICLS in 1973. The statistical measure of earnings is based on the concept of wages as income to the employee. Earnings should relate to employees' gross remuneration, that is, total earnings before deductions by an employer for taxes and also deductions of contributions of employees to social security, pensions, life insurance premiums, union dues etc. The term earnings refers solely to remuneration paid to employees by an employer and excludes remuneration received by self-employed workers.

Indicators in sub-dimension 2a Income from employment

2a1	Average earnings	Mean nominal monthly / hourly earnings of employees (local currency)
2a2	Employees with low pay	Percentage of employees with low pay
2a3	Earnings by deciles	Nominal monthly / hourly earnings of employees by deciles (local currency)
2a4	Employment-related income of self-employed	Employment-related income of self-employed by deciles (local currency)

2. Sub-dimension 2b: Non-wage pecuniary benefits

51. The sub-dimension *Non-wage pecuniary benefits* refers to benefits provided by the employer that are non-monetary benefits. Although paid sick leave and paid annual leave are frequently regulated through labour law and collective agreements, they are nevertheless included under this dimension. This is also justified by the fact that there might be a trade-off between direct wages and salaries and non-wage pecuniary benefits, e.g., in countries in which employees can choose an increased salary in lieu of entitlements to paid leave. The indicators currently measure both the entitlement of leave and the leave actually taken.

Indicators in sub-dimension 2b Non-wage pecuniary benefits

2b1	Paid leave entitlement	Percentage of employees entitled to paid annual leave
2b2	Days of paid leave entitlement	Mean number of days of paid annual leave per year to which employees are entitled
2b3	Actual days of paid leave	Mean number of days of paid annual leave used per employee during the reference year
2b4	Sick leave entitlement	Percentage of employees entitled to paid

[21] *Resolution concerning an integrated system of wages statistics*, adopted by the Twelfth ICLS in 1973 available at: http://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/standards-and-guidelines/resolutions-adopted-by-international-conferences-of-labour-statisticians/WCMS_087496/lang--en/index.htm

		sick leave
2b5	Days of sick leave entitlement	Mean number of days of paid sick leave per year to which employees are entitled
2b6	Actual days of sick leave	Mean number of days of paid sick leave used per employee during the reference year

C. Dimension 3: Working time and work-life balance

52. Dimension 3 of the statistical framework on measuring quality of employment covers various aspects of working time and work-life balance. Working time refers to the time associated with productive activities and the arrangement of this time during a specified reference period. Work-life balance in this framework encompasses not only measures that would be expected to be closely related to decisions to work for pay or profit given family or care responsibilities, but does also attempt to measure time allocation between time spent in a job(s) and time spent in private life.

1. Sub-dimension 3a: Working hours

53. The sub-dimension of *working hours* focuses on the number of working hours. The concept of working hours in the context of the statistical framework on measuring quality of employment is the hours usually worked and not the hours actually worked in a reference week, both of which are defined in the 18th ICLS Resolution on Working Time. Incidental fluctuations in working hours, e.g., due to paid leave or illness, are usually of little relevance for quality of employment. Since the framework takes the perspective of the individual worker, in addition to the number of hours worked in the main job, the total number of hours in all jobs held by the same person should also be measured, if available. It is of particular importance to include information on secondary jobs in countries in which secondary jobs are held by a substantial number of employed persons.

Indicators in sub-dimension 3a Working hours

3a1	Mean weekly working hours	Mean weekly hours usually worked per employed person
3a2	Long working hours	Percentage of employed persons usually working 49 hours or more per week
3a3	Involuntary part-time work	Percentage of employed persons working part time for the main reason that they did not find a full-time job
3a4	Distribution of weekly working hours	Employment by weekly hours usually worked (hours in standardised hour bands)
3a5	Multiple job holders	Percentage of employed persons who have more than one job

2. Sub-dimension 3b: Working time arrangements

54. Working at atypical hours, when practiced over a long period of time, may adversely affect worker's health. This suggests that *working time arrangements* are

relevant to the quality of employment. For this reason, the topic is included as a separate sub-dimension. The sub-dimension includes information regarding the share of employed persons working in the evening, at night or on the weekend. Many studies indicate that there is a (negative) relationship between working outside usual working hours (in particular at night, but also during the weekend or in the evening) and well-being. The sub-dimension furthermore covers the use of a flexible work schedule. Although not always having straightforward implications on quality of employment, the flexibility to schedule working time may have a major impact on workers' well-being, too.

Indicators in sub-dimension 3b Working time arrangements		
3b1	Night work	Percentage of employed persons who usually work at night
3b2	Evening work	Percentage of employed persons who usually work in the evening
3b3	Weekend work	Percentage of employed persons who usually work on the weekend
3b4	Flexible work schedules	Percentage of employees with a flexible work schedule

3. Sub-dimension 3c: Work-life balance

55. The sub-dimension *Work-life balance* seeks to highlight elements of work that potentially conflict with other aspects of life or facilitate reconciling work with private life. The balance between work and family life often is difficult for parents with young children. The access of employed persons to child care, as well as the possibility to work at home, may facilitate or impede reconciling work for pay or profit with household duties, child care and leisure activities. Furthermore, the mean duration of commuting from home to work can have a significant impact on work-life balance. The issue of parental leave is a particularly challenging element of this sub-dimension. Such types of leave differ greatly between countries and not all persons in parental leave are considered employed in national Labour Force Surveys. These issues need further development and analysis work in order to gradually improve the indicators.

Indicators in sub-dimension 3c Work-life balance		
3c1	Employment rate of mothers and fathers	Percentage of women, respectively men aged 20-49 years who are employed with and without children under compulsory school age
3c2	Possibility to work at home	Percentage of employed persons whose working arrangements offer the possibility to work at home
3c3	Commuting time	Mean duration of commuting time between work and home (one way)
3c4	Care leave entitlement	Percentage of employed persons entitled to leave for care responsibilities for children or adults

3c5	Parental leave	Percentage of parents in employment on parental leave
3cx	Child care use (experimental)	Percentage of employed parents with children under compulsory school age who currently use child care

D. Dimension 4: Security of employment and social protection

56. The dimension of Security of employment and social protection assesses the threats to employment security as well as the measures and safety nets that can offset possible risks that come with short or long spells of unemployment or being outside the labour force, health problems and retirement. The feeling of insecurity will often adversely affect well-being, as a number of empirical studies have shown.[22]

1. Sub-dimension 4a: Security of employment

57. The sub-dimension *Security of employment* essentially refers to how likely a person is to lose his or her job(s). It involves information on the degree of permanence and tenure of the work, the status in employment and the formal or informal nature of employment. Information on the perceived job security is an important element to complement information available on rather objective indicators regarding security of employment, e.g., the percentage of fixed-term contracts or of persons employed via temporary employment agencies. As demonstrated by recent research, security of employment is a very important dimension for quality of employment. For example, out of all the dimensions, job security and job prospects (as well as work motivation) have the largest impact on the well-being of the worker.[23]

58. Two indicators are still earmarked as experimental: the precarious employment rate and the informal employment rate. While the work of the Expert Group has shown that such indicators can be powerful tools of analysis, it was at the same time acknowledged that further conceptual and methodological developments are needed in order to make the indicators fully operational, in particular in developed countries.

Indicators in sub-dimension 4a Security of employment		
4a1	Fixed-term contracts	Percentage of employed persons 25 years and older with fixed term contract
4a2	Job tenure	Percentage of employed persons aged 25 years or over whose number of years of tenure at the current job or with the current employer is (1) < 1 year, (2) 1 – less than 5 years (3) 5 – less than 10

[22] For a recent overview, see Green, Francis, 2006: *Demanding work. The paradox of job quality in affluent economy*. Princeton and Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 126-149.
[23] See Eurofound, 2013: *Health and well-being at work. A report based on the fifth European Working Conditions Survey*. Dublin. Eurofound.

		years and (4) >= 10 years
4a3	Own account workers	Percentage of employed persons who are own-account workers
4a4	Self-employed with one client	Percentage of self-employed workers with only one client
4a5	Perceived job security	Percentage of employed persons who might lose their job in the next six months
4a6	Temporary employment agency workers	Percentage of employed persons employed via a temporary employment agency
4a7	Lack of formal contract	Percentage of employed persons without formal contracts or without pay slip / pay stub
4ax1	Precarious employment rate (experimental)	Percentage of employed persons who are in precarious employment (as defined in ICSE-93)
4ax2	Informal employment rate (experimental)	Percentage of employed persons in informal employment

2. Sub-dimension 4b: Social protection

59. *Social protection* may be available in a variety of forms including unemployment insurance, pensions, and health insurance. The components of social protection covered here are distinct from those in Income and benefits from employment, as the former are more directly linked with the security of employment (e.g., likelihood of pregnant women losing employment) and often the cost of these benefits is not solely borne by the employer.

Indicators in sub-dimension 4b Social protection		
4b1	Pension insurance coverage	Percentage of employed persons who are active contributors to a pension scheme
4b2	Unemployment insurance coverage	Percentage of employees that are active contributors to an unemployment insurance scheme
4b3	Medical insurance coverage	Percentage of employed persons who are active contributors to a medical insurance plan/scheme related to their employment

E. Dimension 5: Social dialogue

60. The degree to which workers are able to join organisations of their own choosing and on a collective basis enter into social dialogue with employers (and their organisations) and the government is an important aspect of quality of employment that facilitates the improvement of employment conditions covered in the other dimensions of the statistical framework. Effective social dialogue is a prerequisite for healthy employment relationships which in turn contribute to other dimensions of employment quality. Social dialogue includes all types of negotiation, consultation or simply exchange of information between representatives of

governments, employers and workers on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy.

Indicators in dimension 5: Social dialogue		
5.1	Collective bargaining coverage rate	Percentage of employees covered by collective bargaining agreements
5.2	Trade union density rate	Percentage of employees who are members of one or more trade union
5.3	Days not worked due to strikes and lock-out	Days not worked due to strikes and lock-out per 1000 employees (or employed persons)
5.x	Employer organisation density rate (experimental)	Percentage of employees working in enterprises belonging to an employer's organisation

F. Dimension 6: Skills development and training

61. The fit between the skills of the worker and the demands of the job as well as the opportunity to further develop the skills of the worker both play an important role for quality of employment. It has been argued that, while there is a long-term trend to rising average levels of workers' skills one can observe a trend towards skill polarisation. Workers with a lower skill level would have increasing problems in finding employment opportunities and at the same time have to make concessions regarding their salary, employment security as well as working conditions.[24] Empirical research shows a strong correlation of employability and well-being.[25] However, not only low skill levels often go along with lower levels of quality of employment: If the worker is not able to use the acquired skills in his or her job, this might lead to reduced well-being and dissatisfaction.

Indicators in dimension 6: Skills development and training		
6.1	Training participation	Percentage of employed persons having received job-related non-formal education and training in the past twelve months
6.2	Volume of training	Volume of job-related non-formal education and training per participant in the last twelve months (in days)
6.3	Usefulness of training	Percentage of employed persons whose job-related non-formal education and training has helped improve the way they work

[24] Green, F., 2006: *Demanding work. The paradox of job quality in the affluent economy.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 24-43. Gallie, D., 1991: *Patterns of Skill Change: Upskilling, Deskilling or the Polarization of Skills?* In: Work, Employment & Society 5, pp. 319-351. Gallie, D. et al., 1998: *Restructuring the Employment Relationship.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[25] See, e.g., Eurofound, 2013: *Health and well-being at work. A report based on the fifth European Working Conditions Survey.* Dublin: Eurofound.

6.4	Learning at work	Percentage of employed persons whose job involves improving their skills
6.5	Employability	Percentage of employed persons whose work experience and job skills would be helpful to find another job
6.6	Skills match	Percentage of employed persons who have the opportunity to use their knowledge and skills in their current job

G. Dimension 7: Employment-related relationships and work motivation

62. Employment-related relationships and work motivation characteristics are important elements of quality of employment. Empirical research has shown that they directly affect the well-being of the individual employed person, often the impact is even bigger compared to traditional indicators of quality of employment.[26] Employment-related relationships and work motivation are important for several reasons. From the point of view of the individual worker, they not only directly affect health and well-being, but are also key factors for achieving high levels of sustainability of work. Workers who have sufficient job autonomy, can influence organisational decisions, and are not subject to excessive work intensity, will show higher levels of motivation and engagement and be less likely to leave the labour market prematurely. The social support from co-workers and superiors also has a huge impact on the well-being of the workers and is at the same time an important factor to cope with difficult work situations. Two sub-dimensions are distinguished: employment-related relationships and work motivation. The first relates to the social characteristics of the work, for instance the social support from co-workers and superiors as well as the exposure to adverse social behaviour. The second sub-dimension comprises the more individual motivational characteristics.[27]

1. Sub-dimension 7a: Employment-related relationships

63. The sub-dimension on *employment-related relationships* focuses on inter-employee dialogue and relationships, as well as communication between employees and their supervisors. Research on social support has suggested that low social support and social isolation are associated with increased health risks, both regarding the support of co-workers and of superiors.[28] The relationship with co-workers is measured through an indicator asking whether employed persons have a good relationship with their co-workers and colleagues. A similar indicator is being used to measure the relationship with the supervisor.[29] A further aspect is the exposure to socially adverse behaviour in relation with employment. The indicator

[26] Lowe, G. and G. Shellenberg, 2001: *What's a Good Job? The Importance of Employment Relationships*. Canadian Policy Research Networks, Study No. W05, Ottawa, 2001.

[27] See for example: Humphrey, S., J. Nahrgang and F. Morgeson, 2007: *Integrating motivational, social, and contextual work design features: A meta-analytic summary and theoretical extension of the work design literature*. Journal of Applied Psychology, 92, pp. 1332–1356.

[28] For an overview, see Eurofound, 2013: *Health and well-being at work. A report based on the fifth European Working Conditions Survey*. Dublin: Eurofound, pp. 26-27.

[29] In contrast, whether regular feedback is received from the supervisor is rather seen as an indicator for work motivation and therefore included in sub-dimension 7b.

selected for the statistical framework focuses on unequivocal cases of adverse behaviour, i.e. employment-related physical, psychological or sexual violence.

Indicators in sub-dimension 7a: Employment-related relationships		
7a1	Relationship with co-workers	Percentage of employed persons who have a good relationship with their co-workers and colleagues
7a2	Relationship with supervisor	Percentage of employees who have a good relationship with their supervisor
7a3	Employment-related violence	Percentage of persons who have been victim of physical, psychological or sexual violence in relation with their employment in the last 12 months

2. Sub-dimension 7b: Work motivation

64. The dimension of *work motivation* is key to understanding the factors that drive employed persons in carrying out their work. According to the standard theories of work motivation, characteristics determining work motivation include the degree to which the employee has independence, freedom and discretion in carrying out the job (job autonomy), the degree to which workers receive regular feedback from their supervisor, the degree to which the work carried out is being perceived as having valuable goals and being useful to other people (intrinsic rewards), the degree to which the job has to be provided under time (or other kinds of) pressure (work intensity), as well as the degree to which employed persons are given the opportunity to influence organisational decisions regarding their work.[30]

Indicators in sub-dimension 7b: Work motivation		
7b1	Job autonomy	Percentage of employed persons who are able to choose their methods of work or to influence their pace of work
7b2	Feedback from supervisor	Percentage of employees who receive regular feedback from their supervisor
7b3	Intrinsic rewards	Percentage of employed persons who do "useful" work
7b4	Work intensity	Percentage of employed persons who have to work at very high speed or to tight deadlines
7b5	Organisational participation	Percentage of employed persons who can influence decisions that affect their work

[30] See Hackman, J. and G. Oldham, 1975: *Development of job diagnostic survey*. In: Journal of Applied Psychology, 60, pp. 159-170; Karasek, R., 1979: *Job demands, job decision latitude and mental strain: implications for job redesign*. In: Administrative Science Quarterly, 24, pp. 285–308; Siegrist, J., 1996: *Adverse health effects of high-effort/low-reward conditions*. In: Journal of Occupational Health and Psychology, 1, pp. 27–41.

VI. Future work and research issues

65. To keep the framework relevant in light of labour market changes, the need to adapt the framework should be examined at regular intervals. New data sources might become available, enabling the compilation of new indicators.

66. Research areas identified by the Expert Group so far include the following:

(a) Development of further specific indicators on discrimination at work (sub-dimension 1c);

(b) Development of indicators regarding the prospects for promotion, including the use of longitudinal indicators of mobility within and across employers (dimensions 2 and 6);

(c) Further refinement of the indicators regarding work-life balance, in particular those regarding the implications and measurement of parental leave and the use of child care (sub-dimension 3c);

(d) Requirements for an implementation of the concept of "precarious employment" from the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-93) (dimension 4);

(e) Analysis and development of operational definitions allowing to measure the impact of subcontracting on security of employment (sub-dimension 4a);

(f) Application of informal employment according to the Guidelines concerning a statistical definition of informal employment endorsed by the 17th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) (dimension 4);

(g) Review of the indicators after the revision of the International Classification of Status of Employment (ICSE-93), scheduled for the 20th ICLS (in particular sub-dimension 4a);

(h) Coverage of the population by (basic) health care provision (dimension 4);

(i) Development of further indicators relating to social insurance covering further contingencies, in particular disability (dimension 4).

67. There is a need for continued exchange of experience and expertise at the international level in order to ensure the framework remains practical and relevant. Further research should be spent regarding the option of the construction of indices summarising several indicators. Statistical offices are invited to make use of the statistical framework for publications regarding quality of employment in their countries and to provide feedback regarding their experiences.

VII. How to use the indicators

68. Numerous rounds of exercises and revisions have been undertaken to confirm the current statistical framework and the indicators for measuring quality of employment. Country reports (15 at the time of the Sixth meeting of the Group of Experts on Measuring Quality of Employment) proved the practicability of the dimensions and the indicators. This is not to say that the list of indicators cannot be modified as long as the changes are well-justified. It is acknowledged that the list is dynamic and will require adaptations to changing circumstances in the future.

69. In applying the indicators, it is proposed that countries consider all aspects of quality of employment indicators and decide for themselves which indicators are the most relevant. The Expert Group on Measuring Quality of Employment has prepared detailed indicator sheets. These contain sections on measurement objectives, formula, recommended data sources, recommended metadata, recommended disaggregation, guidelines for interpretation and comparisons as well as suggested readings.

70. At the national level, the indicators can be also used to identify labour market trends. In cases of economic downturn, for example, it is useful to know how the labour market adapts not only in terms of changes in the quantity of work but also through changes in the quality of work. Secondly, the indicators are especially useful to identify groups with less favourable labour market situations. Many different sub-populations could be considered in this context: sex, age categories, ethnic minorities, level of educational attainment, persons with a disability, regions, etc. This requires that the indicators are measured for the categories in question, allowing a breakdown for the quantitative indicators. Finally, the list of indicators may be used to compare the quality of employment in different sectors of economic activity or in different occupational groups.

71. It is recommended that countries decide according to national circumstances in which periodicity they deem it necessary to provide indicators on quality of employment. For many indicators annual reporting would probably be the standard. For indicators that are known to change slowly over time, a multi-annual periodicity might also be sufficient.

72. Another important comparison between different categories of employed persons, at least for certain dimensions of quality of employment, is that of status in employment: employees; employers, own-account workers; and contributing family workers. They may face different issues with respect to issues of quality of employment. The quality of employment indicators aim at covering both persons in paid employment and the self-employed, and for that reason, many of the indicators are defined in terms of all employed persons. While some sub-dimensions are by definition more relevant for employees, countries should in principle cover all employed persons when measuring quality of employment.

73. Finally, it is recognised that change over time, up or down, in some indicators could have a different meaning in different contexts. For example, an increase in the numbers of hours worked per employee for a given economic activity may mean a reduction in the quality of employment in a country where policy-makers view that employees are overworked, compared to another country where there may be a general lack of employment opportunities. The users of the indicator should decide for themselves whether or not quality of employment is improving. Again, as suggested earlier, that assessment should be done using the maximum number of relevant variables available for an individual country.

74. Although the interpretation might be challenging when making international comparisons, countries are encouraged to make use of the indicators also from a comparative perspective. As most indicators are available form internationally harmonised sources, international comparisons should be feasible at least for groups of countries. To further facilitate international comparability, it is recommended to make use of international standard classifications, including the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08), the International Standard Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-93), the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011), and the International Standard Classification of International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic

Activities (ISIC rev. 4). Whenever data are available, the most recent versions of these classifications should be used. Nevertheless, it is recommended to take into account the national circumstances in all of the countries when making comparisons.